

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 45 and 46 have been canceled. Claims 20-27, 29-39 and 40-44 are active in the case. Claims 20-24, 26, 30-37 and 39 are withdrawn from consideration. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Prior Art Rejection, 35 USC 102

Claims 42 - 46 stand rejected based on 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over Takagi et al, U.S. Patent 6,447,696. This ground of rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Takagi et al patent discloses a graft copolymer which finds utility as a scale inhibitor or a detergent additive. The graft copolymer of the reference is specifically prepared by grafting vinylpyrrolidone as monomer (b1) in combination with a monoethylenically unsaturated monomer (b2) onto a polyether compound (A). The monomer (b2) is a carboxyl group containing monoethylenically unsaturated monomer and/or a cationic monoethylenically unsaturated monomer, which in the latter case may be one of the vinyl compounds, such as vinylimidazole, described at column 5, lines 16-25 of the patent. In the use of the graft copolymer as a scale inhibitor agent, the polymer compound is simply added to water in a water system such as a water cooling system (see the bottom of column 8 of the patent). As a detergent additive, as described in column 9, the polymer material is incorporated in an aqueous detergent solution where, in application, it expressly exhibits a dye migration inhibiting effect (col 9, lines 60-64).

The present invention as claimed in Claims 42 - 44 (claims 45 and 46 having been canceled), is directed to a different activity of the active graft copolymer which is as leveling of a dye on textile fibers when the fibers are dyed. A leveling agent, as mentioned at the bottom of page 1 of the specification, is useful for the leveling of vat, direct, reactive or sulfur dyes on a textile. The leveling process is one which supports the migration ability of a dye on

textile fibers. Thus, the process presently being claimed involves an effect which is opposite to the dye migration inhibitory effect expressly taught by Takagi et al. Accordingly, the patent in no manner suggests the opposite effect to one of skill in the art which is essential to the present process of promoting the migration of a dye on fibers. In effect, the Takagi et al patent supports the non-obviousness of the present process. Withdrawal of the rejection of the claims is respectfully requested.

Claims 40 and 41 stand rejected based on 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over Takagi et al, U.S. Patent 6,447,696 in view of either Modebelu et al, U.S. Patent 6,217,621 or Fono, U.S. Patent 4,227,881. This ground of rejection is respectfully traversed.

Present Claims 40 and 41 are directed to a process of stripping-off shade dyeings. In the process the specific graft copolymer as defined in the claim is used to treat a dyed textile, thereby stripping the dye from the textile under the specific process conditions described at the end of the claim which require the aqueous treatment liquor to have, in addition, a dispersant, or at least one reducing agent or at least one protective colloid or a combination of two or all three of the ingredients, the stripping treatment occurring at a pH ranging from 9 to 13 and at a temperature of above room temperature. On the other hand, the composition of the Takagi et al patent is not used to strip-off dye from a textile that is in the form of an aqueous detergent of a combination of a surfactant such as disclosed in column 9 and the graft copolymer described, but rather the graft copolymer component is present in the detergent composition of the patent in order to inhibit migration of the dye that is in the textile. Thus, Takagi et al does not suggest the method of present Claims 40 and 41.

Although the Modebelu patent discloses a process of stripping a dye, wherein the dye can be one of a variety of types (col 2, lines 35-8), selected from a textile, nevertheless the system used is not one which employs a polymer component, but rather is entirely an inorganic system in which dithionate appears to be the active agent. The temperature and pH

conditions, especially the very high temperatures employed of at the boiling point of water, which are disclosed in the reference are only relevant to the inorganic system described and can not be extrapolated to a graft copolymer system such as disclosed by Takagi et al. It is readily understandable from the equation shown in column 2 of Modebelu et al and the examples of the patent that the reaction system of NaBH_4 and $\text{Na}_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_3$ that temperatures of about 200°F are necessary for the stripping system disclosed, and as such are only relevant to the system taught by Modebelu et al. The Modebelu et al patent is thus irrelevant to the present invention and is not seen in any way to be compatible with Takagi et al.

As to the Fono et al patent, it too is deemed to be irrelevant to the present invention, because it discloses an entirely inorganic system as a stripping liquid. The aqueous stripping agent of the patent is one which must contain the specified quantities of sodium hydroxymethane sulfinate, an ammonium salt and a sulfite salt at a temperature of at least about 140°F and a pH of about 5 to 9. Thus, this well known and old stripping system is in no way germane to the stripping method claimed in the present invention. Withdrawal of the rejection of the claims is respectfully requested.

It is believed that the application is in proper condition for allowance. Early notice to this effect is earnestly solicited.

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